

4.0 Ceremonial

4.6 Robes and Dress of the Order

4.6.1 Introduction

The Robes of the Order are the Mantle and the Sopra-vest, which have their origins in the medieval Order of St John whose robes were based on the habit of the Augustinian Monks whose rule the Order followed.

The wearing of the Robes of the Order in New Zealand is a privilege reserved for certain Members of the Order

The Robes of the Order are only worn at ceremonies prescribed by the National Office.

Associated with the Robes are items of dress, which may be worn by clergy who are Members of the Order, when conducting services connected with the Order or when attending meetings of Priory Chapter. These are the Tippet and the black square velvet cap.

Also described are the Tudor hat which is the Order's head-dress, the Stole (also referred to as the Preaching Stole or Scarf) worn by clergy conducting services and the Cope worn by the Prelate.

The Robes and dress of the Order are always worn and cared for respectfully.

4.6.2 The Mantle

The Mantle is based on the cowl (*cucullus* or *cuculla*) worn by the members of the medieval Order and is usually made of black wool and can be lined with black silk. It has organ pleating at the shoulders and is fastened at the neck with a heavy black cord with tassels. The Mantle should be long enough so that when worn, it almost touches the ground.

The Badge of the Order is worn on the left breast of the Mantle (as it was in the medieval Order) and is relative to the Grade of the Member. The following are the specifications for the Badge.

<p>Order Matters Prescription Manual/Order-Robes and Dress Issued by: Authorised by: Tom Dodd, HR / Order Matters Director</p>	<p>Issue No 2 Issue Date:</p>	<p>Doc No ORD 4.6 Page No 1/7</p>
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Order Grade	Badge diameter specification
I Bailiffs & Dames Grand Cross	304 mm white linen, with Beasts in gold coloured silk
II Knights and Dames of Justice	
II Knights and Dames of Grace	304 mm white linen, with Beasts in white silk
III Commanders, Sub-Prelates and Chaplains	220 mm white linen, with Beasts in white silk
IV Officers	152 mm white linen, with Beasts in white silk

An Esquire, or Member of the Order who is called upon to carry any of the Order's Regalia or to carry out other authorised duties, may wear the Mantle of an Officer.

The Badge of the Mantle worn by the Secretary General of the Order and the Secretary of the Priory (who in New Zealand is the Chief Executive) is similar to that of an Officer – 152mm in diameter, but it has two goose quill pens embroidered saltire-wise (in X form) behind the Beasts. The Beasts and pens are in white silk.



The Mantle Badge of a Secretary of a Priory

The Badge of the Mantle worn by Medical Officers of the St John of Jerusalem Eye Hospital is a special pattern bearing the Arms of the Order, on the St John Cross.

Clergy do not wear the Mantle of the Order while conducting services.

Collars were added to Mantles in 1930, and women were first authorised to wear Mantles in 1974.



The Mantle Badge of a Medical Officer at the St John Eye Hospital

There are Prayers that may be recited when putting on and putting off the Mantle. You will find these at Section 4.7

4.6.3 The Sopra-vest

The Sopra-vest of the Order is fashioned on the surcoat (*supra vestis*) worn by the Members of the medieval Order, and is similar to the cassock of the Anglican Church. It is a long coat of thin black cloth buttoned around the neck and down one side, falling to the ankles so it covers all clothing including the shirt, tie and trousers. The Sopra-vest is worn under the Mantle by Bailiffs Grand Cross and ceremonial officers at prescribed ceremonies and by other Members of the Order as appropriate.

The Sopra-vest of a Bailiff Grand Cross has a 304 mm white St John Cross without embellishments sewn onto the centre of the breast.

Bailiffs and Ceremonial Officers of the Grade of Commander or above wear their neck badge over the Sopra-vest in accordance with the instructions contained in Section 7. No other insignia is worn with the Sopra-vest, except a medal ribbon bar or ribbons sewn directly onto the Sopra-vest centred on the upper part of the breast. These should not cover any part of the white St John Cross on the Sopra-vest of a Bailiff Grand Cross.

Women Members of the Order do not wear the Sopra-vest.



The Mantle and Sopra-vest of a Bailiff Grand Cross.



The Mantle and Sopra-vest worn by the Director of Ceremonies (who is a Knight of Grace) – seen carrying his wand. (see 6.9).

4.6.4 The Tudor hat

The Tudor hat is the head-dress of the Order and it is made from black velvet. Although the Order's Regulations prescribe that Tudor hats may be worn on all occasions where Mantles and Sopra-vests are worn, these are no longer worn in New Zealand and are rarely worn elsewhere.



Black velvet Tudor hat worn with Mantle.

4.6.5 Dress for Clergy conducting services

When conducting services in connection with the Order, or when attending meetings of Priory Chapter, clergy may wear the clerical dress appropriate to their denomination. e.g. Anglican clergy would wear a cassock and Surplice or just an Alb, Catholic clergy the Soutane and Surplice or just an Alb. Presbyterian clergy may wear a cassock, gown and academic hood in the manner of the Church of Scotland or an Alb with Stole or Preaching Scarf as is becoming customary in New Zealand.

Over those robes clergy may wear a Tippet.

If a Tippet is not worn the insignia of Sub-Chaplains and Assistant Chaplains should be worn on the scarf on the left breast, or by Chaplains around the neck.

4.6.6 Square black velvet cap

The head-dress for Clergy when conducting services in connection with the Order or when attending meetings of Priory Chapter is a square black velvet cap with red edging and buttons.



Chaplain wearing square black velvet cap and Tippet.

Although prescribed in the Order's regulations, the cap is rarely worn.

4.6.7 The Tippet

The Tippet is a short black hooded cloak with red lining, red edging and red buttons, which covers the shoulders and chest. It is only worn by Clerical Brethren of any Grade of the Order. The Badge of the Order (75 mm in diameter) is sewn on the left breast.

The insignia of a Chaplain would be worn over the Tippet, or on the left breast by a Sub-Chaplain or Assistant Chaplain. A square black velvet cap may also be worn when wearing the Tippet.

4.6.8 The Stole, Preaching Stole or Scarf

When conducting a service, clergy might wear a Stole, Preaching Stole or Scarf, which is a long broad band of silk or brocade material, worn around the neck and which hangs down the front of the clerical dress. Worn under the Tippet, the Stole may be tapered at the neck for comfort or pleated with organ pleats.

Clergy may have a St John Stole made, in which case it should be black and have the Badge of the Order sewn near the foot of each end. If not wearing a Tippet, then a Sub-Chaplain or Assistant Chaplain may wear their insignia in the left breast position of the Stole.



4.6.9 The Cope

The Cope is a full-length silk and brocade outer vestment like a cloak, open down the front and joined at the neck by a brooch or band of cloth. The Prelate and the Sub-Prelate of the Venerable Order, or clergy of the Order of Malta may wear the Cope when conducting services connected with either of the two Orders.

The Cope was a gift to the Pope at the time of his visit to the United Kingdom in 1982 from an anonymous group who saw the need for such a symbol of reconciliation between the Anglican and Catholic faiths.

Blessed by both the Pope and the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Cope was placed in the hands of the Order in 1985 at the time of the centenary of the establishment of the St John Ambulance Brigade. The Arms of the Order were added to those of the Pope and his four predecessors and the Sees of Canterbury and York.

The Cope is displayed at the St John Museum in London.



Cope of Reconciliation
(front)



Cope of Reconciliation
(back)

4.6.10 Who may wear Mantles

The Mantle may only be worn by those Members of the Order eligible to wear them. In the Priory in New Zealand the following Members may wear Mantles (as approved by Priory Chapter on 11 October 2003).

- 1 All Members in Grades I and II
Members of Priory Chapter – Which comprises (Priory Rule 11)
The Prior
The Chancellor
Bailiffs & Dames Grand Cross
2 elected Members (of Grades I, II, or III) from each Region
1 appointed Member (of Grade I, II, or III) from each Region
- 2 Priory Officers (who are at least Officers – Grade IV)
- 3 Esquires (and Members of the Order) undertaking ceremonial duties
- 4 Members in Grade III who are not Members of Priory Chapter
Members of the Priory Trust Board (who are at least Officers - Grade IV)

4.6.11 Occasions when Mantles may be worn

Mantles may only be worn on the following occasions – as prescribed by Priory Chapter on 11 October 2003.

Chivalrous Order activities

- Order Investiture Services
- Church ceremonies of the Order – ie St John Day Services
- Funerals of an Order Member (only with the agreement of the deceased Member's family)
- Presentation of Order Awards (worn only by the Presenting Officers)

By Regulation

- Meetings of Priory Chapter

References:

The St John (Order) Regulations – refer Section 15.